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Road Safety Newsletter



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2017 AWARDS DRIVE TO CUT ROAD DEATHS

The European Road Safety Charter presented its annual Excellence in Road Safety Awards on 26 June 2017, lauding five ingenious and diverse initiatives from France, Greece, Portugal, Romania and Sweden focused on saving lives and fostering responsible driving habits.

The winners were picked from more than 100 entries and include companies, associations and local authorities. They were chosen for their innovative educational approaches (Romania and Greece), protection of vulnerable road users (France and Portugal) and ingenious enforcement idea (Sweden).

The Romanian initiative — an interactive app called 'Mr. Bear Driver' that lets children monitor their parents' performance behind the wheel and urges them to intervene if they pass the speed limit — was picked by the audience to receive a second honour, a special prize dedicated to the late Jacques Barrot, a former EU transport commissioner.

'Every saved life matters'

The ceremony in the Romanian capital of Bucharest took place against the backdrop of sombre statistics. Although Europe is considered to have the safest roads in the world, 25 500 people died on these roads last year and 135 000 others were seriously injured. While this is a slight improvement over the previous year, attendees stressed that the numbers are a major cause for concern.

"It's an epidemic of extraordinary proportions across the globe. It's not to be underestimated," the European Commission's Deputy Director-General for Mobility and Transport Matthew Baldwin said in his opening remarks. "It needs to be tackled, piece by piece, by government, by society and as any other epidemic of this scale would be."

"We will not give up for one moment pursuing our vision, which is to halve the number of road deaths by 2020," he vowed. "Every saved life matters."



Baldwin stressed that road safety was a shared responsibility that required national and local entities, civil society and industry to work in close cooperation and thanked the gathered members of the European Road Safety Charter for their valuable contributions. Baldwin spoke on behalf of Violeta Bulc, the EU Commissioner for Transport.

VIP panel

The ceremony included questions from the audience and a vivid panel discussion with Baldwin, Florentin Bracea, the chief of Romania's road traffic police, Constantin "Titi" Aur, a former Romanian rally driver and Pierre Vella, executive manager of the Malta Road Safety Council.

Romania had an average of 97 traffic fatalities per million inhabitants last year, almost twice the EU average of 50. It consistently ranks among the worst European countries for road safety.

Both Bracea and Aur emphasised the importance of education in bringing about positive change.

Aur, who now runs a driving academy, said Romanian driving schools lagged behind counterparts elsewhere in Europe and that some 1 000 instructors would be trained by his staff over the course of this year in an effort to elevate standards.

"A car can be a weapon in that you can lose control of it in a matter of seconds," he warned.

Holistic approach

Baldwin emphasised that achieving road safety required looking at the sum of its parts — making vehicles safer, improving roads and infrastructure, and ensuring that drivers are properly trained in the fundamentals of wearing seatbelts, following speeding rules and not driving while under the influence of alcohol.

"This is holistic work," he said.

Vella, whose native Malta oversaw the endorsement of the Valetta Declaration on Road Safety by all 28 EU Member States in March, urged fellow Road Safety Charter members to ensure the pledge is put into action.

"We have to work together, we have to implement together, we have to share ideas and we have to be very, very motivated."

Baldwin also underscored the importance of the Valetta Declaration going forward.

"It cannot be filed, it must be used," he said.

EUROPEAN ROAD SAFETY CHARTER: CHANGES UP AHEAD



The Commission's European Road Safety Charter is the largest civil society platform on road safety. With more than 3 400 members, it encourages and supports European associations, schools, universities, companies and local governments to mobilise in the fight against traffic accidents.

Several changes are planned for the Charter's 2016-2019 phase.

- A revamped, more user-friendly website will be launched in the autumn;
- Becoming a charter member will involve a two-step process to better identify how interested parties could best contribute. After registering online, they will be contacted for further details once charter representatives have taken an initial look at their profile;
- Charter representatives will ramp up contact with local authorities in EU countries to improve communication and collaboration;
- A workshop on how to build an efficient road safety initiative will be held in each EU country involving charter members and, whenever possible, local authorities.

For more information: www.erscharter.eu



EUROPEAN DAY WITHOUT A ROAD DEATH



#ProjectEDWARD

21 September

DON'T MISS EDWARD DAY ON SEPTEMBER 21!

Be a part of the second European Day Without a Road Death — also known as the EDWARD project — on September 21!

Take action NOW by signing the road safety pledge at projectEdward.eu and register your initiatives at roadsafetydays.eu.

EDWARD was a big hit last year and raised awareness of road safety issues around Europe.

But really, every day should be EDWARD Day says Commissioner Bulc: "A day without a road death is the vision we should strive for every day, not just today."

THE WINNERS



City of Martigues, France

Rewarded for improving road safety of seniors

With its "Street code for seniors" campaign, the southern French city of Martigues is raising awareness of traffic dangers among a particularly vulnerable group of road users — the elderly. The initiative came about because 30 % of road accidents in the city involved seniors in 2010, raising red flags with authorities. Outreach includes popular workshops that review the rules of the road and update older members of the community of changes to traffic laws they may not be aware of, with photos of scenarios taken in Martigues projected onto a large screen to facilitate understanding.

The initiative also aims to gather statistics and information on accidents specific to the elderly. In 2016, for example, such accidents dipped by 43 % in Martigues. The programme also focuses on sustained mobility and improving the quality of life for seniors through, for example, free shuttles and the extension of pedestrian zones.

More information: <http://www.erscharter.eu/en/node/17364>



Romanian Automobile Club, Romania

Rewarded for its innovative use of a mobile app for teaching children about road safety and its continuous efforts for safer roads.

Also the winner of the special audience-chosen 'Jacques Barrot Prize'

The 'Mr. Bear Driver' app is a fun and interactive game that teaches children the rules of the road and allows them to keep tabs on and even influence their parents' performance behind the wheel. The app monitors a car's speed via GPS and, serving as an Intelligent Speed Assistance system, sends alerts to youngsters if the car goes too fast. The game then urges the children to warn the driver to slow down. If mom or dad doesn't comply and the speed limit isn't met, the children risk losing points or seeing their session end in a virtual crash.

Romania has one of the highest rates of road accidents in the EU. Many such crashes involve families seated in the same car, with high speeds and reckless driving largely to blame. The app was developed in the hope that turning children into active co-pilots will help keep their parents aware of the risks and turn them into better, safer drivers.

The app is available free of charge in Romanian, English, Portuguese and Latvian on Google Play and Apple's App Store.

Mr. Bear Driver: <http://plimba-ursul.ro/en/>

More information: <http://www.erscharter.eu/en/content/good-practice-submission-150>



© CCT – Correios de Portugal

CTT – Correios de Portugal, Portugal

Rewarded for the comprehensive nature and effectiveness of its preventive road safety programme and its continuous efforts for safer roads

The initiative by state-owned postal operator Correios de Portugal also pays particular attention to vulnerable road users — mainly bikers and motorcyclists — that are part of its vast fleet. The project covers a wide array of areas, from vehicle safety to recruitment and training of drivers, and the investigation of accidents. Safe drivers and teams are rewarded for their good performance, providing incentives to do well. The postal service’s goal is to reduce the number of accidents by 20 % for two-wheelers and by 10 % for light vehicles.

More information: <http://www.erscharter.eu/en/content/good-practice-submission-170>



Swedish Abstaining Motorists' Association

Rewarded for its innovative enforcement practice

With its ‘Alco Gates’ initiative, the Swedish Abstaining Motorists’ Association aims to prevent drunk drivers from leaving ports and endangering themselves and others on the roads. Studies have shown that drunk driving is more prominent around the Scandinavian country’s ports, with drivers consuming alcohol on ferries. The “Alco Gates” sobriety tests require no physical contact. Drivers stop at the mobile barriers and blow into a breathalyser tube without leaving their vehicle. If the driver is drunk, the gates will not open and authorities are alerted. If he or she is sober, the gates open to let the vehicle pass. All this happens within seconds.

There is currently an “Alco Gates” trial in a Finnish city. The Australian state of Victoria has also picked up the idea.

More information: <http://www.mhf.se/sv-SE/sakrare-i-trafiken/bast-pa-alkolas-alkomatare/alkolas/alcolocks-in-english/>

HERACLES Group of Companies, a member of LafargeHolcim, Greece

Rewarded for its innovative educational approach

Through a series of entertaining online videos featuring a comedian, the “Good Driver” corporate social responsibility initiative targets the company’s 600 drivers of heavy goods vehicles and buses via a digital platform. It humorously conveys potentially life-saving road safety tips for their daily routines.

Drivers can access the platform from wherever they may be, and are asked to respond to questions following each video. They use their mobile number and a pin to sign into the platform, making it possible to monitor their participation and carry out corrective actions. Results indicate that 85 % of the drivers watched a video on a weekly basis and that 95 % correctly replied to the questions after each episode. The company sends out text messages to alert drivers that a new video has been uploaded, reminding them to participate and informing them of contests and gifts they could win.

Learn more here: <http://www.erscharter.eu/en/content/good-practice-submission-162>

<http://www.kalosodigos.eu/account/intro>



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Find out more...

If these subjects have revved up your interest, then check out the Road Safety website at: ec.europa.eu/roadsafety

Please visit @Transport_EU twitter account for regular updates on #roadsafety” and #EUtransport

Visit these sites for inspiration and information.

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